

Prison Research Meets Practice: A Conversation on Correctional Staff Wellness

Speaker Biographies



Lisa Jaegers, PhD, OTR/L, is Associate Professor in the Department of Occupational Science & Occupational Therapy at Saint Louis University. She has completed numerous studies using the NIOSH Total Worker Health® strategy and co-directs a National Institute of Corrections project to address resources for reducing trauma and organizational stress among correctional workers. Jaegers' research spans the intersections of correctional (prison/jail) workplace health and post-arrest screening and occupational therapy reentry services.



Andy Potter, is a nationally recognized leader in labor and justice movements, with particular expertise in worker rights, leadership development and criminal justice. He is the founder and Executive Director of One Voice United, Director of Strategies for the Michigan Corrections Organization (MCO) and an International Executive Board Vice President of the Service Employees International Union (SEIU). Andy began his career as a correctional officer for the Michigan Department of Corrections where he worked for nearly three decades. He became the Executive Director of MCO in 2015 and has served in union leadership roles in Michigan and nationally through SEIU. In 2019 he was elected to serve as a Vice President for SEIU's International Executive Board. He has chaired SEIU's national

Conservative Member Engagement Committee, the national Corrections Council and was President of the Michigan State Council. Currently, as the Founder and Executive Director of the national non-profit organization, One Voice United, Andy is working to transform the criminal justice system by building bridges and unearthing common ground between all impacted stakeholders. As a strategic leader and connector in the criminal justice reform movement, Andy sits on several boards or advisory councils for other leading national organizations, including the Urban Institute Advisory Board for Prison Research and Innovation Initiative. He has been published in the New York Times, The Marshall Project, The Crime Report, The Detroit Free Press, and is featured in a number of podcasts. Andy serves as a guest lecturer for "Bridging the Gap:

Dialogue across Difference” and has spoken at numerous conferences hosted by the Center on Media, Crime and Justice and John Jay College of C



David Pitts, is a senior research fellow in the Justice Policy Center and director of the Prison Research and Innovation Initiative, a multiyear project that leverages research to promote transparency, innovation, and well-being in US prisons. Pitts uses evidence-based strategies to promote prison reform that benefits both incarcerated people and correctional staff, and toward that end, he has partnered with an array of advocacy organizations, nonprofit service providers, and departments of corrections. His work has addressed a variety of topics in this area, including restrictive housing, prison education, visitation, and correctional staff well-being. In addition to his criminal legal system research, Pitts has written extensively on issues of

diversity, equity, and inclusion in public policy. He has consulted for government organizations at all levels, from small cities to federal agencies, and has taught a variety of courses to graduate students in public policy and criminal justice programs. He is currently an adjunct professor at the John Jay College of Criminal Justice, City University of New York, and he spent a decade in academia as a tenure-track and tenured professor prior to his work in applied criminal legal research. A native of Birmingham, Alabama, Pitts earned a bachelor’s degree from Birmingham-Southern College; master’s degrees from Indiana University and the University of California, Irvine; and a PhD from the University of Georgia.